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Message Text

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PAGE 01 VIENTI 01901 151049 Z

13
ACTION EA-14

INFO OCT-01 ADP-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-09 H-02 INR-09 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-10 PA-03 RSC-01 PRS-01 SS-14 USIA-12

AID-20 T-03 OMB-01 RSR-01 IO-12 /116 W
---------- 059704
R 150925 Z MAR 73
FM AMEMBASSY VIENTIANE
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3043
INFO AMEMBASSY BANGKOK
AMEMBASSY PHNOM PENH
AMEMBASSY SAIGON
CINCPAC

C O N F I D E N T I A L VIENTIANE 1901

E. O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PGOV, PINT, LA
SUBJECT: SOUVANNA WILL ASK NATIONAL ASSEMBLY' S
APPROVAL FOR NEW COALITION GOVERNMENT

SUMMARY: RLG CABINET DECIDED ON MARCH 14 THAT FEBRUARY VIENTIANE AGREEMENT WILL NOT BE SUBMITTED TO NATIONAL ASSEMBLY FOR RATIFICATION. SOUVANNA, HOWEVER, PLANS TO GO BEFORE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY TO RECEIVE ITS APPROVAL FOR NEW COALITION GOVERNMENT AFTER IT HAS BEEN FORMED. END SUMMARY.

1. WE SAW PHENG PHONGSAVAN AFTER CABINET MEETING MARCH 14. PHENG TOLD US THAT AT THE CABINET MEETING IT WAS DECIDED THAT SOUVANNA WOULD NOT REPEAT NOT GO BEFORE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY AT THIS TIME TO ASK FOR RATIFICATION OF FEBRUARY VIENTIANE AGREEMENT. RATHER, CABINET DECIDED THAT EITHER SOUVANNA OR HIS DEPUTY WOULD GO BEFORE AN EXTRAORDINARY SESSION OF THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY TO REQUEST ITS APPROVAL FOR NEW COALITION GOVERNMENT WHICH, ACCORDING TO AGREEMENT, IS TO BE FORMED BEFORE MARCH 23.

2. PHENG SAID THAT THE KING ASKED SOUVANNA TO GO BEFORE
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NATIONAL ASSEMBLY AND SEEK ITS APPROVAL FOR NEW COALITION GOVERNMENT. ACCORDING TO PHENG, THIS PROCEDURE HAD ALSO BEEN APPLIED BY PHOUMI NOSAVAN BACK IN 1962. PHENG SAID THAT PATHET LAO WOULD NOT ACTUALLY APPEAR BEFORE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY SINCE THEY DO NOT RECOGNIZE IT BUT PRIME MINISTER WOULD DISCUSS NEW GOVERNMENT AND HOW IT WAS BROUGHT INTO BEING WITH NATIONAL ASSEMBLY AND THEN WOULD ASK ITS APPROVAL. NO DATE HAS YET BEEN SET FOR THE CONVENING OF EXTRAORDINARY SESSION.

3. ON OCTOBER 8, 1962, THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY PASSED A UNANIMOUS VOTE GRANTING THE COALITION GOVERNMENT FULL POWERS FOR ONE YEAR. THE LPF STRONGLY PROTESTED THIS VOTE, BECAUSE IT DID NOT RECOGNIZE THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY, CHARGING IT WAS ELECTED UNDER FRAUDULENT CONDITIONS.

SOUVANNA SUPPORTED THE MEASURE IN ORDER TO LEGITIMIZE THE COALITION GOVERNMENT. THIS MODE OF INVESTITURE MAY BE WHAT PHENGWAS REFERRING TO IN HIS REMARK ON THE PROCEDURE " APPLIED BY PHOUMI NOSAVAN IN 1962." IT WAS PROBABLY PHOUMI WHO SUBMITTED IT TO THE ASSEMBLY, ACTING ON BEHALF OF SOUVANNA.

4. COMMENT: SOUVANN' S ACTION HOPEFULLY WILL GET HIM OUT OF THE DILEMMA HE IS FACED WITH FOLLOWING HIS CONVERSA-TION WITH THE KING MARCH 11. AT THAT TIME KING EMPHASIZED TO SOUVANNA THAT CONSTITUTIONAL PROCESSES HAD TO BE MAIN-TAINED AND THAT THE CEASEFIRE AGREEMENT WITH THE LPF WAS NOT AN INTERNATIONAL TREATY OF ANYTHING LIKE THAT BUT WAS MERELY AN AGREEMENT REACHED BETWEEN THE TWO LAO PARTIES. ITS IMPLEMENTATION HAD TO BE PURSUANT TO THE CONSTITUTION AND ANY NEW GOVERNMENT RESULTING THEREFROM HAD TO RECEIVE ASSEMBLY BLESSING. GIVEN THE RAMBUNCTIOUS MOOD OF CERTAIN NATIONAL ASSEMBLYMEN AND ALSO NATIONAL ASSEMBLY PRESIDENT PHOUI SANANIKONE' S INCLINATION NOT REPEAT NOT TO BE HELPFUL TO SOUVANNA (ALTHOUGH HE IS CURRENTLY BEHAVING VERY WELL), SOUVANNA WAS FACED WITH A DILEMMA. SISOUK TOLD ME YESTERDAY THAT SOUVANNA HAD PRIVATELY CONFIDED WITH HIM THAT HE WAS EXTREMELY TROUBLED BY THE KING' S INSTRUCTIONS AND DID NOT KNOW HOW HE WOULD GET OUT OF THE IMPASSE HE WAS THUS FACED WITH. THE FOREGOING APPEARS TO BE THE PATH HE HAS CHOSEN AND WE BELIEVE
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IT SHOULD HAVE SOME CHANCE OF SUCCESS.

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*** Current Handling Restrictions *** n/a
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TAGS: PGOV, PINT, LA
To: EA
SECSTATE WASHDC INFO BANGKOK
CINCPAC
PHNOM PENH
SAIGON
Type: TE
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